

THE Character of a Phanatique.

Of the performing of this task it will be necessary first to give you the Etymology and genuine signification of the word [*Phanatique*]. Secondly the occasion, and most common acceptation: Thirdly, who may be justly termed *Phanatiques*, before we come to the Character.

1. The Etymologie of the Word.

P*hanatique* is derived from the Greek Verb *φαντασμαι*, and signifies a vain Dreamer, Enthusiast, or Brain-sick Visionist, one who by natural distemper, or spiritual insatiation, or both, is deluded and would delude others by the pretense of Revelations, and New Lights, never content with common Experience, universal Consent, or plain Demonstration.

2. The Occasion and common Acceptation of the Word.

Now the occasion of this word seems to be this. At a general Council for the regulating of affairs in Church and State, all Complaints tending to the matters in hand were to be received and debated: but there being alwayes in the World of Men more or less of that spirit of Pride, Self-conceit and Discontent, the unreasonable clamours of giddy persons would have so filled the Assembly, that nothing of concernment could have been taken into consideration, had they not still kept such a *Decorum*, as that nothing might be admitted but what upon Examination of a select company was found to be of weighty consequence: wherupon those impertinent troublers, and busie male-contents who were rejected, received the most pertinent denomination of *Phanatiques*; and so it hath been in all ages a distinctive term, whereby those who kick against the present constitution of a regulated Church and State have been distinguished from the sober part of a Nation, who submit to all ancient and fundamental Laws and Constitutions: but especially those religious irreligious mad-men-Heretics, being parallel to the *Seditious* of the Citie of *Hierusalem* in its *Destruction*.

3. Who may rightly be called Phanatiques.

TO particularize the several sorts of *Phanatiques* would be the work rather of a Volume than a Sheet; but in short, *First*, Those may be truly called *Phanatiques*, who depend more upon the dictates of their own corrupt imaginations, and phantasies of their distempered brain than reason, custom, experience, or the general consent of all ages and nations; but especially those who prefer their pretended inspirations and new lights before the revealed Will of God in the Scriptures. *Secondly*, Those who like the Jews will not be content unless Christ will submit to their dirty humours, and come live upon earth with them, and so order the matter for them, that they, and they only, may possess the earth, and will by no means be persuaded to submit to any authority but His, whose Kingdom is not of this world. *Thirdly*, All those, who out of an ambitious itch to appear somebody, under what pretenses soever, endeavour to subvert all order and discipline both in Church and State, by opposing every power, not respecting Right, Law, Reason, true Religion, or the publick good, wherein their own is included, were they but so sober as to be sensible of it.

THE CHARACTER.

A*phanatique* is the Mulhrom of distemper, a false Conception gotten by the Air upon the sick womb of a confused phancy, a meer changeling, who devours greedily all doctrines, but receives nourishment from none; the dishonour of his reputed father, the plague and ruine of his miserable mother; he is a reasonable creature incapable of the right use of reason. He is a certain thing that would puzzle *Plato* or *Aristotle* to define, and indeed no man knowes well what he is, but himself least of all. You may better expresse him in the Negative than the Affirmative; for he is neither Pagan, Turk, Jew, nor true Christian. But to come as close to him as we can, he is a confused lump of earth not refined, still retaining the habit of that *Chaos* from whence he first proceeded, and is like a beggars bag fill'd with scraps of all sorts of food, or like a Butchers cushion made up of the various kinds of Shreds and patches, which he hath filched from several garments. He is of a sceptical humour, and you may sooner pick all Religions out of him than one: and is somewhat a kin to all professions different from his own, but varies most from the Orthodox Protestant. So that a right phanatique is a phantastick fellow, pleasing himself with new fangles, and continually gaping after Novelties, and the discovery of New lights. He forsakes the true fire, and runs over bogs and moorish places to light his torch at an *ignis fatuus*, and (ten to one but) he sinks in the pursuit of it, and is never able to return again. He is fit for neither Heaven, Earth, nor yet Hell, because he is against all order and government, which is not only exercised in Heaven and Earth, but practised by the Devils themselves. He pretends much to a good conscience, yet thinks it lawful to murder all that dissent from him in opinion, although he changes from himself more often than the Moon. If you talk with him to day you are never the nearer to know him to morrow, for you shall finde him perfectly metamorphosed. He rayls much against the Pope of *Rome*, and the Whore of *Babylon*, when none so much resemble the beast as himself, whose mark he bears in his fore-head, but wants the Looking-glass of reason to discern it. He writes all men in the black book of Reprobation, but his own fraternity, and concludes all his Fore-fathers damned. He thinks himself wiser than all others, although he be a verier fool than a meer Naturalist. He will prate two hours together, and after all you may sooner resolve a *Delphian* Oracle, than unfold his meaning, only he is dexterous in blaspheming those two great Ordinances of God, Magistracy and Ministry. He is naturally an arrant Coward, yet his Chymical opinions infuse into him a kinde of frenetique valour. He is a perfect Saint in his own conceit, and would not change places in Heaven with any of the Apostles, whom he calls nothing but bare *Paul*, *Peter*, *John*, &c. and dare not add the title of Saint for fear of sinning. He hath but a mean respect to the Scripture, and could wish some things expunged out of the Bible, having blotted them out of his minde and opinion, which is all one as to curtel the Scripture. And for Tradition he cannot abide it, esteeming of the writings of ancient Fathers as Winter-tales, or old Womens fables. If he be not an enemy to Government in the abstract, he is rarely reconcilable to present powers, (in case they do not shewre preferments upon him) for that he thirsts after innovation as well in things Civil as Ecclesiastical. And loathes Antiquity as a French-man does his fashions of the last year. He is by nature covetous, yet will not grudge to squander away his whole estate to maintain Conventicles, and is charitable to none but his own tribe. The Proverbs of *Solomon* are a great eye-sore to him, but especially that Text, *My son, fear God and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change*. To conclude, He is a bubble or bladder tossed to and fro with every winde, which at length breaks, and vanisheth to nothing.

